

CITY OF DURHAM

Request for Proposal
False Alarm Reduction Program Services
Bid 15-0027

Addendum #1
April 10, 2015

This Addendum #1 incorporates questions posed by candidate(s) for the City of Durham's False Alarm Reduction Program Services and corresponding responses.

1. Question: What educational/citizen outreach programs are undertaken at the current time to reduce false alarms?
Answer: The City of Durham's False Alarm Reduction Program web page provides false alarm prevention tips, and a summary of frequently asked questions. At this time, there are no educational/citizen outreach programs to reduce false alarms.
2. Question: What area do you wish to seek improvement upon from the current situation?
Answer: Desired areas of improvement are relative to collections on accounts and citizen education/outreach. A more robust process for identifying primary party responsible/accountable for billing purposes is also desired.
3. Question: How is the hearing and appeals updated?
Answer: The hearing and appeals are updated by the City's false alarm service provider after receiving notification from the City's designated staff person assigned to review appeals. The City has no way of updating or modifying false alarm service provider information directly. Coordination is accomplished via email and phone calls.
4. Question: How is the appeals request received by the City of Durham and how are the alarm holders notified of the appeals decision?
Answer: The alarm user may appeal an assessment of civil penalties and other enforcement decisions to the City of Durham by setting forth in writing the reason(s) for the appeal within thirty (30) days of the date notification of the assessment of civil penalties or other enforcement decision. These written appeals are sent to the City's false alarm provider for administration. The City's service provider emails these appeals to the City's designated staff person, who conducts a review and renders a decision, based upon a preponderance of the evidence standard. The City's service provider will then notify and follow up with the customer in writing, presenting the result of their appeal. Failure to give notice of appeal within the required time frame constitutes a waiver of the right to contest the assessment of civil penalties or other enforcement decisions.

The Notice of Appeal submitted by an alarm user must provide their name, the alarm location, date of the false alarm, permit number, reason(s) for the appeal, and any supporting evidence.

The City of Durham has a listing on the service provider's hosted web site which serves as a guideline for the false alarm incidents for which appeals are not generally granted:

1. Faulty, defective, or malfunctioning equipment supplied by an alarm business.
2. Improper installation or maintenance by an alarm business.
3. Improper monitoring by an alarm business.
4. Alarm activations that occur while alarm technicians are repairing or servicing the alarm system.
5. An occurrence where no evidence of criminal activity is present.
6. Mistakes made by private contractors, maids, cleaning crews, etc.
7. Item(s) within the home or business that move, causing motion detectors to activate (i.e. curtains, signs, balloons, etc.)
8. Doors and/or windows that become loose and cause a break in the contacts that activate the alarm system.
9. Caretakers who watch homes or businesses when owners are away and who activate the alarm in error or are not familiar with required codes or passwords.
10. Pets, rodents, or wildlife movement in or near the home or business.
11. Alarms caused by apartment management employees.

In the event or case of numbers 1 and 2 above – if it is suspected that the false alarm was due to faulty equipment or improper installation, we ask the customer to contact their false alarm business. In such cases, the system should be inspected and repaired when necessary.

The list above is only intended as a guide to assist alarm users in deciding whether to appeal a false alarm or contact their alarm business for discussion. This list is not intended to cover every situation where an appeal may be denied.

5. Question: How are the following functions handled?

a. Returned mail

Answer: Returned mail is handled completely by the city's current false alarm service provider.

b. Returned checks

Answer: Returned checks are handled completely by the City's current false alarm service provider. The City of Durham asks that the current false alarm service provider charge per NC GS 25-3-506 the maximum allowable returned check fee which is \$25.00.

6. Question: Does the City of Durham have an independent access for the following actions?

a. Change account details or make updates in the current system?

Answer: No. The City of Durham does not have independent access for changing account details or making updates in the current system.

b. To pay false alarm fee in the current system?

Answer: No. The City of Durham does not have independent access for paying alarm fees in the current system. The City of Durham either mails the payment to the current service provider, or applies the payment to the City's accounts receivable system and coordinates with service provider to credit the customer account.

c. To update permit status or expiration date?

Answer: No. The City of Durham does not have independent access for updating permit status or expiration date.

- d. To change the false alarm incident status in the current system?

Answer: No. The City of Durham does not have independent access for changing the false alarm incident status.

- e. To receive and provide appeal decisions?

Answer: Yes. The City of Durham has the ability to receive and provide appeal decisions. Currently, the communication is routed through service provider via email to properly record.

